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## How the Supervisor Aids the County Agent

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## HOW THE SUPERVISOR AIDS THE COUNTY AGENT

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Things which are to be achieved must first be visualized. Vision, the power to see beyond the immediate and to discern the things that are possible to achieve, is something all successful supervisors possess. The successful supervisor has the ability to see the opportunity before him. He possesses the power to inspire the agents under his supervision with enthusiasm and ambition to achieve. Dr. Seaman A. Knapp, the founder of extension work, possessed these qualities in great degree. Doctor Knapp saw the opportunity that is open to the extension worker and the high service to which he is called, when he said, "The power which transformed the humble fishermen of Galilee into mighty apostles of truth is ever present and can be used as effectively today in any good cause as when the Son of God turned his footsteps from Judea's capital and spoke to the wayside children of poverty."

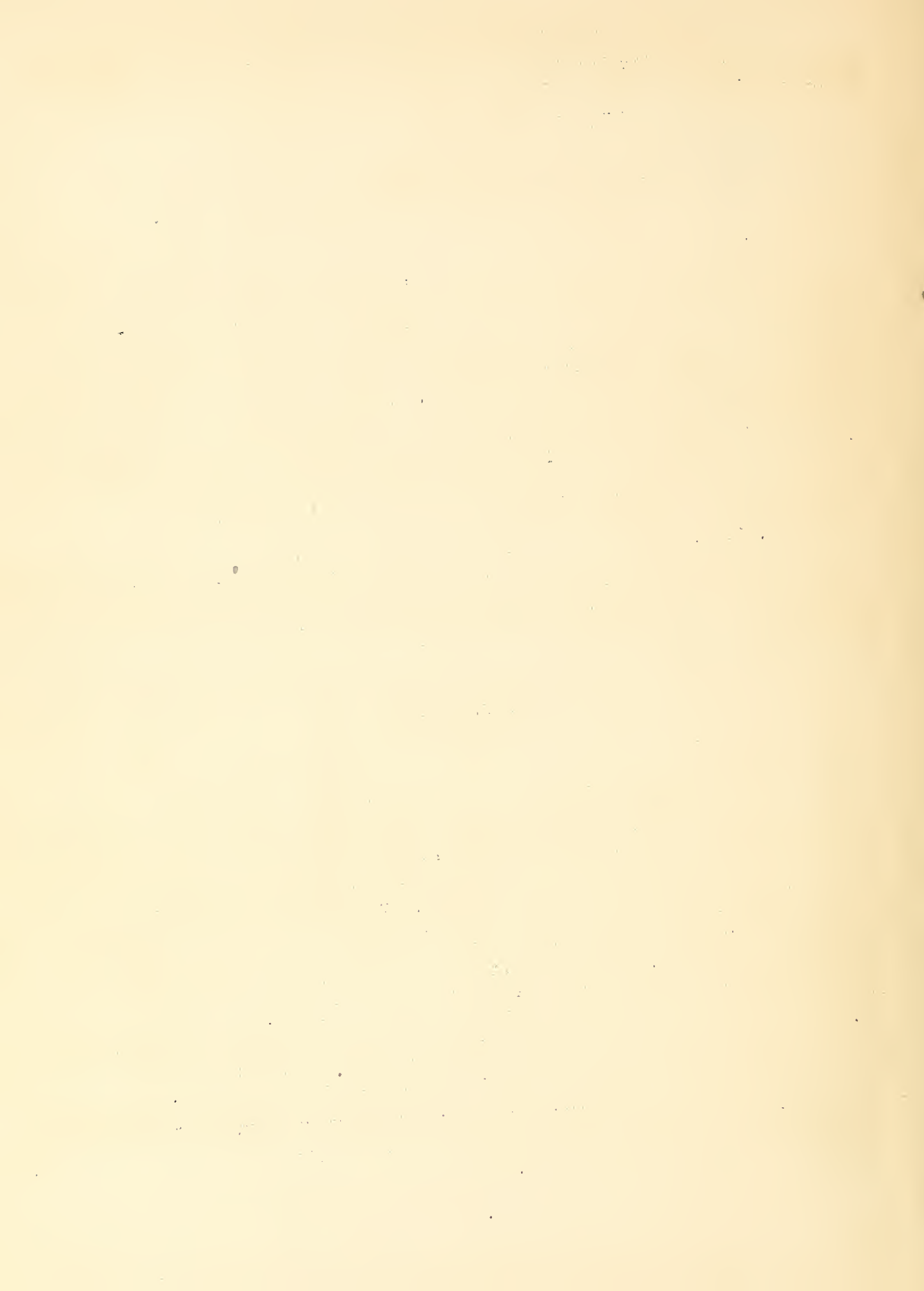
Dr. C. B. Smith, our chief, visualizes the ultimate objective of extension work when he says, "The most precious thing in America is the American home. I look upon the farm homes of the country as the very source and cradle of the continuing strength and virility of the nation. The maintenance of high ideals and a high standard of living in the farm home is the essence of our extension work."

### The Situation

The organization of the supervisory personnel in extension work has remained practically the same as in previous years, except that there has been a growing tendency for States to adopt the plan of assigning district agents the duty of supervising groups of agents within the State. The number of district supervisors increased from 91 in 1920 to 111 in 1929. Through long experience as county agents and practical farmers, and through their study of successful work within and without their district, these supervisors become expert consulting extension engineers. They not only serve as a general educational agency, uplifting and enriching the lives of those they supervise, but frequently serve as a balance wheel in deciding extension policies at the college. When the work in a county is not succeeding, the alert supervisor coaches the agent as to proper procedure before damage has been done to the work. Extension work can not coast along; power must be applied. Where best results are obtained, the power of practical inspirational supervision is applied constantly. Agents are prone to become discouraged until they themselves catch the vision and begin to see the results.

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DISTRIBUTION: A copy of this circular has been sent to each State extension director, State supervisor of extension work, State agricultural college library, and State experiment station library.



Supervisors also help worthy agents with salary increases, better office equipment, and the like. The following table shows that since 1922 the average annual salary of county agricultural agents has been increased approximately \$214.

Average annual salary and expense of county  
agricultural agents, 1922, 1926, 1928, and 1929.

Salary and expense	1922	1926	1928	1929
Average annual salary -----	\$2,667	\$2,811	\$2,881	\$2,968
Salary from State and Federal funds <u>1/-</u>	1,440	1,516	1,706	1,660
Salary from county funds -----	1,100	1,217	1,057	1,219
Salary from other sources -----	128	79	118	89
Average annual expenses <u>2/-</u> -----	1,121	1,031	1,116	1,120

1/ The increase in salary from State and Federal funds in 1928 is due to supplementary funds made available

2/ Average expenses are based on figures for 41 States.

The average increase in county expenditure for county agents' salaries reveals the interest shown by local people and reflects the good work done and indirectly the good supervision agents have had.

Supervisors are spending more time on actually assisting the agents in planning and executing their work, and less in financing the work and replacement of agents. This better supervision is having a stabilizing influence on the agents and is partly responsible for the improvement shown by the following table:

Turnover in work of county agricultural agents 1/

Item	1922	1923	1924	1925	1926	1927	1928	1929
Number employed June 30 --	2,065	2,077	2,085	2,083	2,107	2,152	2,187	2,264
Appointments -----	507	626	480	495	446	510	404	487
Discontinued work -----	351	442	329	321	262	244	208	245
Transfers -----	96	178	104	154	139	147	121	162

1/ Not including assistants or negro agents.

It is evident that there is less turnover now than formerly even in the face of attractive offers being made to county agents by commercial concerns. Though the above table shows a gradual reduction in appointments, some of these were transfers to counties demanding experienced agents and paying higher



1917

1918

1919

1920

1921

1922

1923

1924

1925



salaries. The good judgment used by supervisors in the selection of agents to avoid misfits, coupled with the training given, has resulted in far less worry on the part of the supervisors about getting financial support for the work.

### County Agents Assisted with Program Building

Supervisors have rendered the greatest service in developing county programs, especially with new agents. Their ability to give the new agents a vision of the problems and solutions, and to fire their ambition to attack problems, and inspire confidence in their own ability to solve them, has had much to do with the stability of programs and the personnel fostering them.

The supervisor's first duty in establishing an agent, after introducing him to key men, is often that of presenting a philosophy of how to aid the farmer to find the answers to his problems on his own farm or on that of a neighbor, for therein lies the secret of successful extension work. The most effective way to reach and influence the farming classes is by object lessons. Through thoughtful counsel and example, the young agent has been brought to see that a successful leader brings together those interested in a problem and invites their ideas in finding a solution based on experience. The supervisor has shown the agent how to obtain the best results from these experience meetings relating to a problem.

The admiration of an agent for his supervisor has often developed after the latter has assisted in straightening out a difficult local problem. Through mixing tact with a fact-focusing attitude he has frequently caused an ill-advised group to readjust its mental concept. For example, a group enthusiastic for organizing a local creamery may become apprehensive if a district agent, after listening sympathetically to their plans, shows that the county does not have production sufficient to meet the business need of a successful cooperative.

By thinking through with the agent the economic facts of the county, the supervisor brings out the relative importance of each enterprise. Problems of economic production or marketing in each enterprise have been clearly and definitely outlined. In some instances data have been collected as to size of farms and incomes above farm expense. The relationship of size of income to a satisfying home life is being brought to the attention of the leaders of both men and women in the counties. With these facts as a basis, major or minor enterprises contributing most to income and living at home have been selected. If extension work has been established in the county for some time, the supervisor has given the agent further insight into the work by measuring the progress made with the various enterprises in the county and the agricultural practices and extension activities back of such advancement. He usually plans with the agent the type of demonstration which will serve best to illustrate the practices controlling economic production and discusses the assistance that the specialists may render. If the agent is new, the supervisor assists at a later date in handling the commodity groups and county council, extension committee or county farm board. This practice has proved most helpful, as young agents especially may make mistakes which will require some time to overcome.



# County Programs Supplemented by Systematic Plans

The value of the county program agreed upon depends to a considerable extent on the development of supplemental plans of work for carrying it out. Supervisors and agents have usually realized the importance of limiting the number of enterprises worked on in order to concentrate on more convincing demonstrations and, through mass attack, obtain greater results. The following outline illustrates the set-up used in some States for enterprise plans:

County \_\_\_\_\_ Agent \_\_\_\_\_

What	How Much	How	Where	When	By Whom	Time for specialist help
Enterprise phase	Number of re-sult demonstration adults and juniors	Methods or means and agencies used: such as field meetings, tours, news items, circular letters	Place or community	Month or approximate date.	Help wanted from specialist or district agents	

A more comprehensive suggestive plan follows:









In some States it has been found advantageous to set up a tentative monthly calendar, covering all work and indicating the periods when certain work is to be done. The following extract of county agent plan of work by months will illustrate. This acts as a constant reminder if the plan is suggested by months and clipped to the bottom of a calendar and hung over the agent's desk. The agent checks off each job accomplished prior to removing the monthly sheet at the end of each month and files the sheet away for future reference.

#### January

Establish two orchard result demonstration meetings.  
Hold 4-H club plantings of black walnuts around schools in 5 communities.  
Hold 4 orchard field meetings.  
Hold 5 pine and locust seedling plantings. (Covering 1 acre each.)  
Hold 2 pine thinning and forest management demonstration meetings.  
Assist county grange organization in securing orders for sweet clover, lespedeza, soybeans and clovers for spring planting.  
Establish one or two result pasture demonstrations and visit one or more.  
File a request for the services of forestry, poultry, and dairy specialists for February.  
Send out 3,300 circular letters on spring legume seeding.  
Get out 4 to 8 news items on above work.  
Work out with home demonstration agent a cooperative home garden plan.

#### February

Hold 4 forestry thinning and management demonstration meetings.  
Work out cooperative plans with cattle breeders to establish ten 4-H calf club projects (25 boys and men have application in for calves).  
Establish 3 flock management record keeping demonstrations and visit 3 which are already established.  
Hold 3 poultry field meetings at the 3 established demonstrations.  
Visit 8 fertilizer grain demonstrations relative to top dressing.  
Instruct 20 lespedeza and sweet clover demonstrators with the seeding of demonstrations. Also instruct 4 mixed hay demonstrators about seeding.  
Get out 8 to 10 publicity stories concerning work.  
Get out circular letters advertising orchard meetings, also walnut planting and legume seeding information.  
Hold dairy school. Develop plans for 20 modified cow test result demonstrations and start same.  
Hold three 4-H club meetings.  
File a request for the bee specialist for March.





## Supervisors Strengthening Own Plans of Work

Supervisors have also improved their own plans of work over the past several years, incorporating in these plans material similar to that previously suggested for county agents. The blank on page 8 is similar to that used in several States. It has the following advantages: The sheet may be kept in the brief case of the supervisor for ready reference. By referring to this sheet just prior to entering the county a supervisor may make his own decision as to what should be done on this visit. If it should be raining, thus preventing field work for example, the supervisor may assist in planning work, setting up files, writing circular letters and the like. Upon leaving the county the supervisor may enter in the column the number of hours spent on such help. For convenience, it has been found advantageous to use the tenth of a day as a unit. For example, if half a day is spent on one item, 5 should be inserted in the column opposite the item. At the end of the year the supervisor may add vertically and determine the amount of time spent in each county. By adding laterally he may determine how much time was spent on each item. This information may serve as a basis for making out new usable plans for the next year.

## County Agents Assisted with Follow-up On Programs And Enterprise Plans

In the case of the new agents the supervisor may actually assist the agent in locating a demonstration along a public road and plan with the farmer the entire year's activities. Through such procedure, the agent is brought to realize at the start the importance of the result demonstration as the foundation of his work and that records on such demonstrations are a form of insurance which no agent can afford to be without. He begins to realize that farm people are not so many bottles to be filled but that such information will be the foundation for field and other meetings dealing with the enterprise and gives "punch" to news items and other means and agencies called for in the plan of work. On the other hand, the agent begins to see the importance of not undertaking work on too many enterprises and not getting more demonstrations than he can properly supervise and get reports on. The value of records has often been made more impressive by reviewing the progress made in various counties on certain enterprises and the accompanying data, indicating the definite practices demonstrated and the profit above the average production cost for the county. The agent soon catches the difference between words of wisdom pedagogically administered and the use of living examples of economic production to induce timely and constructive action.

Supervisors have found that if they do not make a check-up during visits to the counties, some young agents may look on the county program and the enterprise plan as a matter of form and emphasize some one agricultural enterprise which may not have great economic importance. Other agents may not get the real



Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	FIELD WORK	Counties
													Ashley, Baxter, Boone, etc.
												1. County programs: Assist agent in developing definite program based on economic facts.	
												2. County plans of work: Assist in planning demonstrations that demonstrate and methods of attack necessary to execute programs	
												3. Conferences with agent and leading farmers relative to agricultural program	
												4. Field meetings and tours: Assist agent to develop plan of work and show results of demonstration	
												5. News items: Assist agent in writing and publishing news relating to demonstrations and other accomplishments and events	
												6. Fairs: Assist agents to develop enterprise and other educational exhibits	
												7. Marketing: Assist agent and local people to coordinate production and marketing	
												8. Check-up: Assist agents in ascertaining	
												(a) If demonstration demonstrates and obtain records on same	
												(b) The advance of enterprise or project by years and developing charts to show progress	
												9. Office management:	
												(a) Assist agent in developing reference file, bulletin rack, etc.	
												(b) Furnish short cuts in office management	
												(c) Obtain stenographic help where needed	
												10. Maintaining the force:	
												(a) Obtaining funds	
												(b) Maintaining field force	
												(c) Establishing friendly relationships for the work.	





demonstration idea or philosophy. One of the first steps with new agents is to review the demonstration data relating to various enterprises in the county. The supervisor may visit some of the former or new demonstrators with the agent, especially if the agent has not served as assistant under a trained agent. With the help of supervisory counsel and assistance, it usually does not take an agent long to realize that demonstration results illustrating dollars gained are the gold nuggets out of the pay gravel of extension work. He soon realizes, too, his function of keeping influences, such as field meetings, tours, news items, and circular letters at work to acquaint other people with these results and to bring about a general acceptance of improved practices. Thus, advantage is taken of the human instinct to imitate.

### Keeping Results of Work Before Public

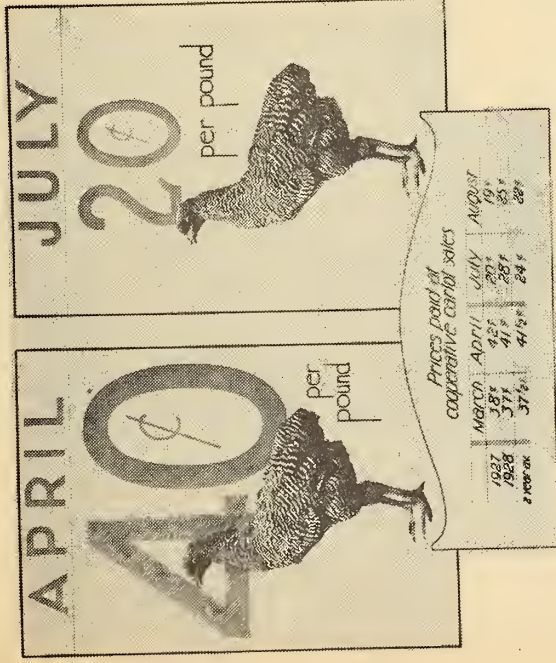
Supervisors have rendered the greatest assistance in taking to the agents the best publicity methods and in assisting them to use such methods. For example, when assisting in conducting field meetings and tours, the supervisor has planned the event with the agent and demonstrator to make the results of the demonstrations as self-explanatory as possible by using records and other means of making the demonstration tell its own story. He has also assisted in outlining what should be brought out with reference to demonstrations by the demonstrators. It has been found that by the demonstrator relating his experiences, he has had far greater effect on mass opinion than if the agent had related the facts. This has served to train leadership as well. Though the county tour, which is really a series of field meetings, may have been planned at the time of writing the enterprise plan, the supervisor often goes over the route and assists in scheduling stops, printing programs and placards, and making other preparations some time in advance. He has also assisted in developing publicity in the form of news releases to be published in advance or in developing a series of circular letters in news form. On the day of the tour, the supervisor is constantly on hand to offer suggestions based on his experience, or to take notes on what was said by the demonstrator so that he later may assist the agent in writing news telling what was seen and heard on the tour.

The supervisor often assists the agent in conducting a poster or essay contest dealing with the enterprise in cooperation with the schools. It has been found that great enthusiasm may be aroused by offering prizes furnished by some local civic body. The children discussing their problem with their parents offer another means of acquainting the whole farm family with a problem and its possible solution. The posters on page 10 were developed by the Extension Service to illustrate State and county poultry problems. The supervisors have also assisted in developing educational exhibits used in the county agent's office, or bank window, or at the county fair. (The illustrations on pages 12 and 13 offer suggestions.) The type of exhibit found on page 12 should be fitted with a colored electric light with flicker button to attract attention. Some district agents also assist their men in obtaining good pictures of demonstrations which make good publicity material and slides of film strips to be used in winter meetings.



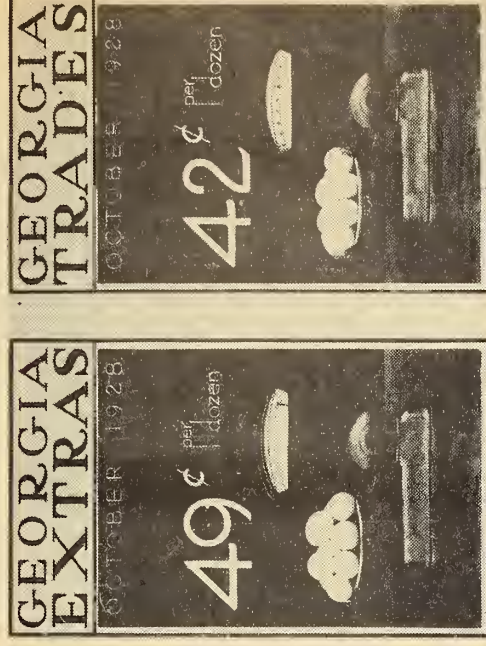


## EARLY BROILERS PAY FOR HIGHEST PRICES AND LARGER PROFITS MARKET BROILERS EARLY



TO GET BROILERS ON THE MARKET DURING  
MARCH AND APRIL, HATCH OFF IN JANUARY  
AND FIRST TWO WEEKS IN FEBRUARY

## IN MARKETING EGGS SIZE *plus* QUALITY BRINGS THE TOP PRICE



### SUCCESS DEPENDS UPON

1. Economical production
2. A high-class product, fresh and clean
3. Careful grading and packing
4. A knowledge of market conditions

These illustrations were used as posters. Similar ideas and material can be made up for window displays, and for charts to be used before farm groups.



In an article in Printer's Ink for September 1928, entitled, "What kind of testimonials appeal to farmers?" the writer deals with the effectiveness of pictures, especially those with a pleased customer in the picture. Supervisors realize the value of good pictures and have shown agents how to get and use them. They are finding too that a camera which takes a picture not larger than  $3\frac{1}{4} \times 4\frac{1}{4}$  has its advantages. In the first place small cameras are not so expensive to purchase and operate as large one. Prints from small cameras may be enlarged to a desired size. Another advantage is that one is more likely to have success with the small cameras. Where agents find it difficult to adjust cameras, the inexpensive box camera has been found advantageous. Illustrations of good pictures will be found on page 15. Such pictures not only illustrate news items and reports but are helpful in preparing sets of slides or film strips for use in winter meetings.

Suggestions Offered by the Visual Instruction and Editorial  
Work of the Office of Cooperative Extension Work.

The Utility Photograph:

- (1) Tells clearly a definite story
- (2) As a rule tells only one thing
- (3) Suggests action
- (4) Is taken as near object as possible

Staging Photographs:

- (1) Have object stand out clearly
- (2) Have an inconspicuous background
- (3) Have a clear foreground
- (4) Take enough time to get a good picture

Photographing Individuals:

- (1) Surroundings.....)
- (2) Costumes.....) Should be N A T U R A L
- (3) Action.....)

Lighting:

- (1) Have objects wholly in sunlight or wholly in shade
- (2) Have sun's rays strike object at angle

Mechanical Factors:

(Using  $3\frac{1}{4} \times 4\frac{1}{4}$  hand camera with anastigmat lens,  
speed approximately f 7.5 or 7.7.)

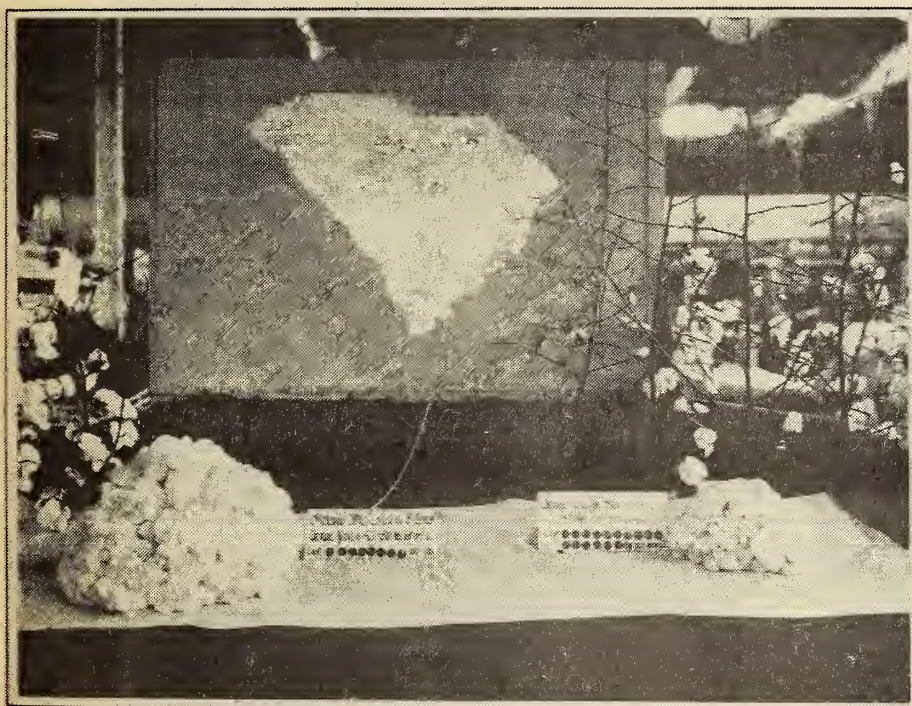
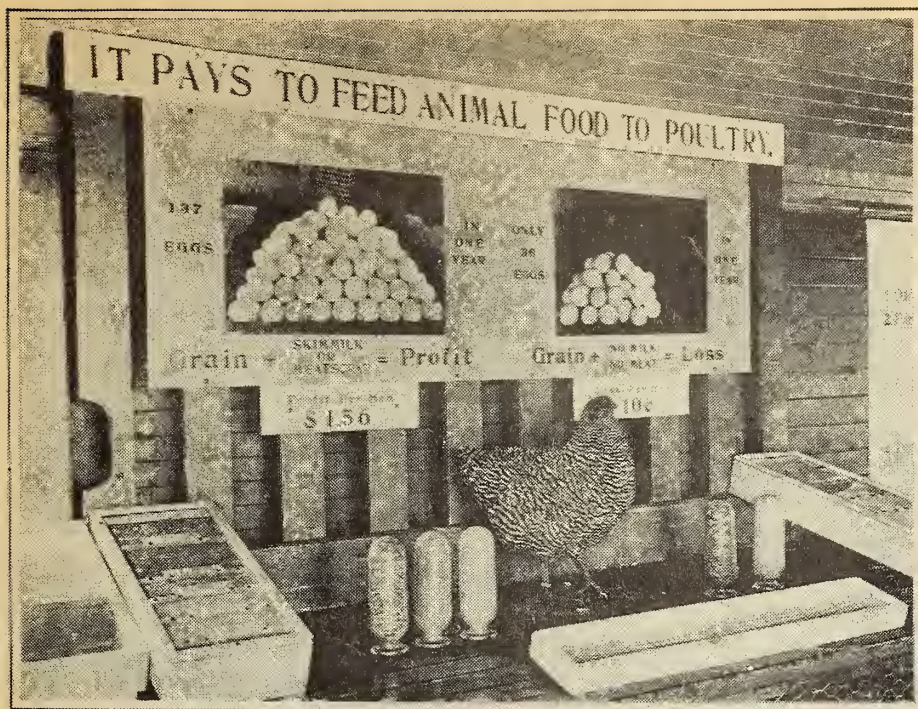
(With rapid-rectilinear lens,  
using U.S. stops.)

- (1) Exposure -  $1/25$
- (2) Stops:
 

Brilliant sunlight.....	f 16	U.S.	16
Bright sunlight.....	f 11	U.S.	8
Light clouds.....	f 8 (approx)	U.S.	4
Cloudy or shade with strong reflected light-			
wide open.			
- (3) Focus - measure or reckon distance.







Local window exhibits of this type will convince business men of the economic importance of various enterprises.







The electric train has frequently attracted so much attention that the sidewalk was blocked. This type of exhibit can be used in different counties by simply changing the charts and labels to fit the local situation. The chart can be removed and in its place actual products may be exhibited on a platform back of the chart under which the train passes





### Points to Keep in Mind:

- (1) Keep lens clean
- (2) Use only fresh films
- (3) Keep the camera level
- (4) CARRY A TRIPOD AND USE IT.

The following from the Printer's Ink article already referred to further justifies the type of publicity work that has been carried on under the supervision of district agents. A study made by salesmen who visit farmers showed that "it is almost impossible to sell the farmer unless the salesman has a good list of satisfied customers. The value of a testimonial as a sales argument is beyond question. When it is genuine and sincere, nothing in the whole arsenal of salesman's ammunition will bring down so many orders. The only problem is to get good testimonials and to use them to the best advantage."

A quotation from Printer's Ink for February, 1929, tells why one of the country's most successful advertisers continues to spend large sums in this way. Here is what he says: "It is true enough that millions and millions of people buy and like my product and that advertising is not going to induce them to buy substantially more than they are buying now. When I started to advertise my object was to get them to buy, and like, this product. And I advertise now, to keep them constantly reminded that they do buy it and that they like it. If I should proceed with a lesser advertising program, my sales would dwindle in proportion. If I should stop advertising entirely and depend upon the momentum that already has been created, the chances are I soon would be a very small factor in the business if not out of it entirely." The dependence of this successful manufacturer upon advertising must not be construed as meaning that he lacks faith in his merchandise. If buyers did not get their money's worth for the nickels they spend, this particular product would have been forgotten long ago even though the manufacturer spent \$100,000 a day for advertising instead of the \$10,000 he does spend. Good and sufficient advertising may cause people to buy unworthy merchandise once; but they won't buy it twice. And even if the merchandise is good they are likely to forget about it unless they are kept constantly reminded of it. It is just as necessary that an extension agent keep the results of the work before the people in a county as it is for a manufacturer to remind the public constantly of the merits of his goods. Supervisors find it necessary to make timely visits to see that agents are following plans worked out. Some agents do not use to best advantage demonstration data dealing with economic production or orderly marketing through means and agencies previously mentioned.

### Assistance Rendered in Office Management by Supervisors

Quickly available county commodity and demonstration facts are indispensable, as they are ammunition for practically every activity fostered by the agent. News items, circular letters, field meetings and tours, in fact, all means and agencies previously mentioned, lack force if convincing local facts or proofs are not available. They can not be available unless a system of keeping them is developed in the county agent's office. Supervisors are finding an increasing need for facts on which to hand constructive thinking. Through a fact-focusing attitude local farmers and business men readjust their mental concepts and their business.





# THE PHOTOGRAPH THAT TELLS THE EXTENSION STORY

SUGGESTS ACTION



Dusting apple trees to control insect pests

IS TAKEN CLOSE TO SUBJECT



County agent teaching club members to select seed corn

TELLS ONLY ONE THING



Examining native lespedeza grown as a demonstration

EMPHASIZES PRINCIPAL OBJECT



Local leader explaining points of good type of layer

HAS INCONSPICUOUS BACKGROUND



Demonstrating copper-carbonate treatment of seed wheat to control stinking smut

HAS CLEAR FOREGROUND



Farmer showing increased cotton yield obtained by following extension practices





Many supervisors point with pride to the fact that all agents in their territory are provided with adequate filing systems. Several States have furnished their agents with uniform systems, and supervisors have found it advantageous to assist in establishing these systems subject to local modifications. Many such systems comprise the following:

- (1) Information file in file cabinet set up on an enterprise basis for filing farm bulletins and other subject matter or other material for quick reference.
- (2) One drawer of the cabinet is set aside for the regular alphabetical letter file. However, some agents who do not have stenographic help prefer the use of a small letter file box placed on the desk for convenience. By purchasing a new box each year, the transfer file and yearly discard problem is avoided.
- (3) A narrative report file is set up on an enterprise or project basis in the deep desk drawer for convenience. It usually contains extracts from monthly reports, notes, pictures, news items, circular letters, and the like to be used for timely publicity and as a basis for yearly narrative reports. This file may also contain daily record sheets, monthly forms, and check-up information.
- (4) A practical card-index file or letter-size file for recording demonstrational as well as other facts relating to an enterprise. Such a file is usually set up on an enterprise or project basis, and each division may contain plan of work card or sheet. These plans are often set up on a calendar basis. A card or sheet for cooperative marketing may also be placed under each enterprise heading.

The agents appreciate very much this reference file of bulletins and other material that can be found at a moment's notice.

#### Agents Assisted in Checking Up Progress

For several years supervisors have shown an increased interest in assisting agents in checking up on progress made in interesting farmers in certain recommended practices dealing with various enterprises fostered. Such procedure is often revealing not only to the agent but frequently to supervisors as well. The following blank will illustrate points considered in making studies of this kind. By considering the means and agencies used, it is possible to get an index as to their effectiveness as measured by the increased purchase of a product or animals, indicating his acceptance of recommended practices relating to the enterprise.





## Enterprise Check Up

Kind of enterprise \_\_\_\_\_

Plan	: 193_	: 193_	: 193_	: 193_	: 193_	:
Number of result demonstrations started or under way - (Adult	:	:	:	:	:	:
(Junior	:	:	:	:	:	:
Demonstrations completed	:	:	:	:	:	:
with adequate records - (Adult	:	:	:	:	:	:
(Junior	:	:	:	:	:	:
List of practices emphasized:	:	:	:	:	:	:
Number of field meetings	:	:	:	:	:	:
Attendance	:	:	:	:	:	:
Number of tours	:	:	:	:	:	:
Attendance	:	:	:	:	:	:
Other meetings where results of demonstrations were discussed	:	:	:	:	:	:
Attendance	:	:	:	:	:	:
Different circular letters sent out	:	:	:	:	:	:
Number of different letters sent out	:	:	:	:	:	:
News items supplied	:	:	:	:	:	:
News articles written	:	:	:	:	:	:
Number of educational exhibits	:	:	:	:	:	:
Number of farmers accepting practices	:	:	:	:	:	:
demonstrated, judged by number	:	:	:	:	:	:
pounds of fertilizer or seed	:	:	:	:	:	:
sold locally, or tons of line or	:	:	:	:	:	:
number of animals, etc. purchased	:	:	:	:	:	:
or treated, number of houses	:	:	:	:	:	:
built, etc.	:	:	:	:	:	:



By collecting this material on one enterprise over a district or entire State and substituting counties for years at the top of the columns, supervisors have found that it is possible to study the effectiveness of various methods or means and agencies by taking into account the individual merits and effectiveness of such methods used in the various counties. It is also possible to substitute communities or townships for years at the top of the columns and study with the agents the importance of placing work in all sections of the county. In making local studies, supervisors have found that in some instances the work does not satisfactorily cover the county, and too much personal service is rendered.

Some one has said when referring to mankind generally "we feel virtuous because we work so conscientiously that we are tired, when we should feel ashamed that we work so hard and make so little progress."

It is hoped the foregoing information gleaned from county and State contacts may result in creating ways and means of making greater progress in extension work.







